

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The invention provides a method and apparatus for recycling toner cartridges. A shredder breaks up the toner cartridges into pieces, thereby releasing any toner from within the otherwise substantially sealed cartridges. The toner pieces along with any free toner powder are then fed through a separation stage including a mechanical separator and a trommel separator. Each separator employs a sifting screen, which allows smaller particles to fall through the screen while holding back the larger pieces. Both separators agitate the pieces to mobilize the smaller particles. A vacuum extraction system is used to withdraw air from around the cartridge pieces and an air ionizer is included for feeding ionized air into the apparatus to reduce any static electronic charge buildup. The toner is then removed from the extracted air by a dust collector.